

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CU-02 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-03 H-01 INR-05

L-02 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 RSC-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15

SAJ-01 NIC-01 VO-03 /056 W

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R 051342Z DEC 74

FM AMEMBASSY BUDAPEST

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2357

INFO USIA WASHDC

AMEMBASSY BELGRADE

AMEMBASSY BUCHAREST

AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

AMEMBASSY PRAGUE

AMEMBASSY SOFIA

AMEMBASSY WARSAW

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 1 OF 2 BUDAPEST 3360

E. O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: HU, PINT, SHUM

SUBJ: CASE OF DISSIDENT INTELLECTUALS KONRAD,
SZELENYI, SZENTJOBI AND BIRO

REF: BUDAPEST 3010 AND 3265

1. KONRAD AND MRS. BIRO CAME TO EMBASSY DECEMBER 4
TO VISIT CONSOFF IN CONNECTION WITH EMIGRATION PLANS.
AT THAT TIME PAO INTERVIEWED SUBJECTS TO GAIN ADDITIONAL
FIRST-HAND INFORMATION ON IMPLICATIONS OF CASE TO GOH
CULTURAL POLICY. DURING INTERVIEW KONRAD DID ALL
TALKING WITH MRS. BIRO NODDING FREQUENT APPROVAL.
STORY AS FOLLOWS:

2. KONRAD AND SZELENYI WERE WORKING ON A STUDY
DEFINING THE INTELLECTUAL CLASS IN HUNGARY AS UNIQUE
AND INDEPENDENT ENTITY. THESIS PROPOSED THAT BOTH
TECHNOCRATS AND BUREAUCRATS RUNNING HUNGARY ARE
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BASICALLY MEMBERS OF THIS INTELLECTUAL CLASS, THAT

THIS TOP LAYER HAD INTERRELATED INTERESTS, THAT THEY CANNOT BE CONSIDERED TO BELONG TO THE WORKING CLASS AND THAT THEIR INTERESTS ARE NOT NECESSARILY IDENTICAL WITH THOSE OF THE LATTER.

3. THIS THESIS, OF COURSE, VIOLATES BASIC TENET OF PARTY THAT INTELLECTUAL CLASS DOES NOT EXIST BUT RATHER IS SUB-GROUP OF WORKING CLASS WITH LATTER RULING COUNTRY.

4. KONRAD EMPHASIZED THAT THRUST OF HIS AND SZELENYI'S ARGUMENT WAS NOT REPEAT NOT THAT THIS SCHEME IS A DEVIATION FROM SOCIALIST OR COMMUNIST IDEOLOGY REGARDING THE STRUCTURE OF SOCIETY. RATHER, HE CONTENTED, IT IS STATEMENT OF FACT REGARDING NATURAL EVOLUTION OF SOCIALIST SOCIETY, PARTICULARLY SINCE REAL RULING CLASS OF STALINIST DAYS, NAMELY SECRET POLICE, HAS ESSENTIALLY BEEN SUBMERGED, THUS ALLOWING A MORE "NORMAL" EVOLUTIONARY TREND OF EVENTS TO TAKE ITS COURSE. IN SUM, THE AUTHORS CLAIM THEY WERE NOT REPEAT NOT CHALLENGING THE COMMUNIST NATURE OF SOCIETY, LIKE IN KONRAD'S WORDS "THE NEW LEFT IDEOLOGIST INTELLECTUALS ATTEMPT TO DO", BUT RATHER WERE DESCRIBING ITS EVOLUTION AND IN HIS VIEW ITS NATURAL CHARACTERISTICS.

5. AFTER ITS COMPLETION KONRAD AND SZELENYI'S MANUSCRIPT WAS GIVEN TO SZENTJOBI FOR READING. THREE DAYS AFTER RECEIPT OF THE MANUSCRIPT POLICE APPEARED AT SZENTJOBI'S APARTMENT AND UNDER GUISE OF LOOKING FOR PORNOGRAPHIC MATERIAL CARRIED OUT EXTENSIVE HOUSE SEARCH AND FOUND MANUSCRIPT. KONRAD, SZELENYI AND SZENTJOBI WERE THEN ARRESTED FOR SUSPICION OF INCITEMENT AND ATTEMPTING TO SEND AN UNAPPROVED MANUSCRIPT TO THE WEST. KONRAD ASSUMES THAT POLICE OBTAINED INFORMATION ABOUT MANUSCRIPT FROM BUGGING HIS APARTMENT, WHERE HE DISCUSSED WORK FREQUENTLY WITH SZELENYI DURING ITS PREPARATION. KONRAD BELIEVES HE WAS NOT DENOUNCED, SINCE HE CLAIMS THAT ONLY AUTHORS AND SZENTJOBI WERE AWARE OF CONFIDENTIAL

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MANUSCRIPT AT THAT TIME.

6. SUBJECTS WERE DETAINED, KEPT IN JAIL CELLS FOR SIX DAYS AND SUBMITTED TO DAILY POLITE BUT INTENSIVE QUESTIONING REGARDING NUMBER AND IDENTITY OF OTHERS WHO MAY HAVE READ MANUSCRIPT AND PLANS OR INTENTIONS OF SENDING IT TO THE WEST. NUMEROUS FRIENDS AND ACQUAINTANCES OF KONRAD, SZELENYI AND SZENTJOBI,

INCLUDING MRS. BIRO, WERE ALSO BROUGHT IN FOR QUESTION-
ING ABOUT THEIR KNOWLEDGE OF THE MANUSCRIPT AND PLANS
FOR SENDING IT WEST AND THEIR HOUSES WERE SEARCHED BY POLICE
BUT NONE OF LATTER WERE DETAINED.

7. KONRAD STATED ALL QUESTIONING CARRIED OUT UNDER
"CIVILIZED AND HUMANE CIRCUMSTANCES" AND ALWAYS
WITH CAREFUL REFERENCES TO EXISTING LAWS ON INCITEMENT
AND SENDING UNAUTHORIZED MANUSCRIPTS TO THE WEST.

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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 2 OF 2 BUDAPEST 3360

8. AFTER SIX DAYS THE THREE INDIVIDUALS INVOLVED
WERE ADVISED BY "POLICE OFFICIAL OF THE MINISTRY OF
INTERIOR RESPONSIBLE FOR THE CASE" THAT NO CHARGES
WOULD BE BROUGHT. A FORMAL WRITTEN WARNING WAS
GIVEN REFERRING TO CITED LEGAL CLAUSES AND THEN
DIFFERENT OFFICIALS STATED TO ALL THREE INDIVIDUALS
(THIS ENTIRE PROCEDURE WAS CARRIED OUT SEPARATELY
FOR EACH OF THEM) THAT THE SUSPENSION OF THEIR
PASSPORTS AND RIGHTS TO TRAVEL ABROAD WOULD REMAIN
IN EFFECT, BUT IF THEY WERE TO MAKE APPLICATION FOR

A PASSPORT TO EMIGRATE TO THE WEST, THE MINISTRY OF INTERIOR WOULD GIVE ITS APPROVAL.

9. KONRAD STATED THAT HANDLING OF CASE WAS PROBABLY DETERMINED BY FACT THAT INTERROGATIONS DID NOT LEAD TO EVIDENCE THAT ANYONE ELSE HAD READ MANUSCRIPT OR THAT PLANS TO SEND IT WEST EXISTED. ACCORDING TO HIM, HUNGARIAN LAWS ON INCITEMENT REQUIRE NOT ONLY THAT MATERIAL FOR THAT PURPOSE BE PRODUCED BUT THAT CONFIDENTIAL

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SOME SUBJECT OR RECIPIENT BE SHOWN TO HAVE BEEN EXPOSED TO IT. SZENTJOBI GOT OFF BY INSISTING HE HAD NOT YET READ MANUSCRIPT, SINCE HE HAD ONLY RECEIVED IT THREE DAYS EARLIER.

10. KONRAD SAID HIS PASSPORT AND RIGHT TO TRAVEL ABROAD HAVE BEEN SUSPENDED SINCE THE HARASZTI CASE, WHICH WAS TRIED IN THE SPRING OF 1974 AND IN WHICH HE WAS A WITNESS. HE STATED THAT IT WAS HE WHO HAD GIVEN THE HARASZTI MANUSCRIPT TO THE HUNGARIAN WRITER LIVING IN YUGOSLAVIA FROM WHOM THE MANUSCRIPT WAS CONFISCATED AT THE YUGOSLAVIAN BORDER. HE EXPLAINED THAT NO FURTHER ACTION WAS TAKEN AGAINST HIMSELF, BECAUSE HE TESTIFIED THAT HE HAD PASSED ON THIS MANUSCRIPT ONLY FOR THE PURPOSE OF HAVING IT READ BY THE INDIVIDUAL CONCERNED AND NOT REPEAT NOT FOR THE PURPOSE OF SENDING IT OUT OF THE COUNTRY. APPARENTLY NO EVIDENCE COULD BE PROVIDED TO THE CONTRARY OR POSSIBLY FOR OTHER REASONS THE AUTHORITIES CHOSE NOT TO PURSUE THE MATTER FURTHER.

11. KONRAD DOES NOT KNOW AT WHAT LEVEL DECISION ON CASE REGARDING EMIGRATION WAS MADE, BUT HE DID STATE THAT KADAR WAS OUT OF THE COUNTRY AT THE TIME. HE EXPRESSED SADNESS AT FINDING HIMSELF OBLIGED TO LEAVE HUNGARY AND SAID THAT HE FELT NEITHER ALIENATED OR LIKE A DISSIDENT. HE EXPRESSED APPREHENSION ABOUT LIVING ABROAD, SADNESS ABOUT BECOMING AN EXILE, AND CONCERN ABOUT HAVING TO WRITE OR WORK IN ANOTHER LANGUAGE. HE EXPRESSED HOPE OF BEING ABLE TO RETURN TO HUNGARY IN A FEW YEARS IF THE CONDITIONS HERE WERE TO CHANGE. HE STRESSED THAT BY THIS HE DID NOT MEAN A CHANGE IN THE SYSTEM BUT ONLY "A RETURN TO THE MORE NORMAL CONDITIONS OF 1968 AND 1969." HE SAID THAT SINCE HIS RELEASE HE HAS NOT BEEN BOTHERED OR FOLLOWED BY POLICE. HE GAVE THE APPEARANCE OF BEING DETERMINED NOT TO BURN HIS BRIDGES, THUS LEAVING DOOR OPEN FOR A POSSIBLE EVENTUAL RETURN TO LIVING IN HUNGARY.

12. WHEN ASKED HOW NEWS OF HIS ARREST HAD REACHED THE
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WEST AND SPREAD SO QUICKLY, KONRAD REPLIED THAT HIS
WIFE HAD TELEPHONED HIS PUBLISHER IN GERMANY THE DAY
OF HIS ARREST AND COMMUNICATED ALL THE INFORMATION.

13. COMMENT: THE STATEMENT BY KONRAD THAT HE WAS A
MAJOR PARTICIPANT IN THE HARASZTI CASE SHEDS IMPORTANT
LIGHT ON PROBABLE REASONS WHY GOH REACTED AS IT DID TO
WHAT TURNS OUT TO BE WORK ON A SECOND "UNAPPROVED"
MANUSCRIPT DURING THE SAME YEAR. CONSIDERING THAT
GOH CHOSE NOT TO PROSECUTE KONRAD AT TIME HARASZTI
GIVEN SUSPENDED SENTENCE, THEIR REACTION TO SECOND
CASE BECOMES EASIER TO INTERPRET AS OBJECTION NOT
ONLY TO SUBSTANCE OF WORK BUT TO KONRAD'S DISREGARD
OF WARNING TO CEASE AND DESIST FROM SUCH RESEARCH
AND/OR ACTIVITIES FOLLOWING HARASZTI TRIAL.
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